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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF S/E NATSIOS, AND AF/SPG  
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON  
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: UNAMID DEPLOYMENT STEADY BUT BIGGER TESTS STILL TO COME

REF: KHARTOUM 01472

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SUMMARY  
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11. (SBU) While obstacles to the deployment of the UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) exist--primarily at the local level--deployment of the force has been steady, and there are no indications that Sudan is blocking UNAMID as a matter of official policy. However, as CDA Fernandez explained recently to Foreign Minister Lam Akol (reftel), the logistical demands on the peace-keeping mission (including visa, land, water and customs requirements) will increase exponentially as the force deploys. These complexities, in addition to bureaucratic inertia at the local level, could jeopardize the deployment timelines set by the UN.

12. (SBU) A recent report from the UK Embassy in Khartoum, based on a briefing with UNAMID Director of Administration Mohamed Yunnus, provides a reasonable snapshot of the current conditions:

-- Land: There are no problems in El Fasher. Some detailed arrangements remain to be made in Zalingei, but no obstacle is expected. In Nyala, intensive negotiations that have included UN/AU Joint Special Representative Rudolphe Adada and Akol have resolved some administrative challenges caused by friction within the Sudanese Government, between Khartoum and South Darfur State, and between the Wali of South Darfur and local farmers. The final agreement for Nyala is expected to be delivered to UNAMID on September 21. (Note: Sudan's interagency technical committee, chaired by MFA Undersecretary Muttriff Siddiq and charged with supporting UNAMID deployment, met on September 12 and resolved the outstanding land issue in Zalingei, Akol told CDA Fernandez on September 18. End note.)

-- Night Flying and Airports: UNAMID has no intention of conducting routine night flights in or out of Darfur at present. Arrangements for casualty evacuation are in place, however. There will need to be an arrangement for night flying when UNAMID gets night-capable tactical aircraft. Reports of Sudan blocking the use of large AN 124 transport aircraft are false. None of the runways in Darfur are capable of supporting this aircraft. (Note: Khartoum is the only airport in Sudan that routinely operates after dark and the only airport suitable for an AN124. Safety arrangements and lighting are rarely reliable elsewhere. End note.)

-- Customs: The customs issues are resolved, with UN materiel transiting the port at an acceptable rate. (Note: Three weeks ago, senior UN officials reported that fifty percent of the backlog had been cleared, and the rest was proceeding. End note.)

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Comment  
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13. (SBU) These are very early days, and whether Sudan permits the

delivery of material and resources in support of non-African parts of UNAMID will present more objective tests of its commitment to UN Security Council Resolution 1769. Sudan's previous track record on following through on its promises is weak, but this time, the Sudanese, will be different. Bureaucracy at all levels is obstructionist by instinct, and there will be local difficulties and normal logistical bottlenecks, at least, throughout UNAMID's deployment. That said, PAE has reported that it has received some necessary, and expedited, flight clearances from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for later this week. This pace of expedited clearances will need to continue--and not relapse into the seven to eight-day "normal" clearance period--in order for all sides to facilitate the arrival of UNAMID. CDA will continue to engage the Sudanese government on these issues at all levels. End comment.  
FERNANDEZ